



Park Rangers Association of California
P.O. Box 153
Stewarts Point, CA 95480
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(707) 847-3077

March 17, 2020

Dear Marshall McClain,

Let me briefly introduce myself, I'm Matt Cerkel, the president of the Park Rangers Association of California. I have worked in the Park Ranger profession since 1991 and have served in various capacities in the parks, as a uniformed seasonal Park Ranger Aide with no enforcement authority, as a public officer Park Ranger, as a unarmed peace officer Park Ranger and as an armed peace officer Park Ranger. In my 29-year career I can say I felt the safest and most effective when performing law enforcement duties as an armed Park Ranger.

Your Los Angeles City Park Rangers are some of the most highly trained Park Rangers in the entire state of California, they already receive the same law enforcement training as any Police Officer or Deputy Sheriff by completing the POST Basic Police Academy and therefore your Park Rangers receive extensive firearms training. Your Park Ranger program is a POST participating agency, just like your Police Department. Very few Park Ranger agencies in California meet the stringent requirements to be a POST participating agency and nearly all those that do arm their Park Rangers. Additionally, very few if any Peace Officers regardless of agency who meet your Park Rangers level of training in your city or county are unarmed.

Your Park Rangers are regularly put in dangerous and even life-threatening situations while performing their law enforcement duties protecting your parks and the public visiting them. Currently, if an armed officer response is needed your Park Rangers must depend on waiting for a response from LAPD, which may be extended, depending on what city park your Park Rangers are patrolling and depending on the workload and other incidents LAPD are working. With armed Park Rangers the LAPD would no longer need to routinely provide back-up to the Park Rangers. Your Park Rangers and your park visitors deserve a better margin of safety.

The Park Rangers Association of California supports the proposal to arm your highly trained and professional Park Rangers.

Sincerely,

Matt Cerkel
President,
Park Rangers Association of California
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Park Professionalism Through Unity